

The Grapevine

Newsletter of the Yountville Veterans Home

February 12, 2009



above photo: Stan Oppgaard, Deputy Secretary, Veterans Homes; Barbara Ward, Deputy Secretary for Women Veterans; Marcella McCormack, Administrator, Yountville Veterans Home; Thomas Johnson, Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs.

Thursday, February 5, 2009
Secretary Johnson visited the home along with some of his CDVA staff to inform and answer questions regarding the furlough that is authorized by the Governor's Executive Order S-16-08.

Starting Friday, February 6, 2009 many of the offices at the Veterans Home of California will be closed the first and third Fridays of each month because of the current state of fiscal emergency and the executive order.

"I have had the privilege of being at all three of our Veterans Homes this week and I want to thank the staff at the Homes, at Headquarters and at our Regional and District offices for your commitment to our mission and serving our veterans and families during this difficult time. I appreciate all of the efforts you have made to be sure that the care and service we provide to our veterans will not be impacted during this fiscal emergency." Tom Johnson, Secretary of California Department of Veterans Affairs.

THE GRAPEVINE

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Work-at-home Scams

The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) is receiving complaints from people who are victims of work-at-home scams. They are often hired to "process payments," "transfer funds," or "reship products." In reality they are cashing fake checks, transferring illegally gained money, or receiving stolen products and shipping to criminals.

Others may sign up to be a "mystery shopper" to receive fake checks to cash and wire the money to "test" a company's services. They are told they will be compensated with part of the money or products.

These job scams can also be a source for the criminal to get your personal information and use it to access your bank account, open credit card accounts, etc. You think you are providing information to your new employer but you are actually opening the door to criminals.

If you have been a victim of Internet crime, please file a complaint at IC3 at www.ic3.gov

To our Veterans, Customers, and Staff:

SERVICES CLOSED

Mail service to Sections
The Home's Bank
Administration
Public Information
Finance
Patient Benefits
Health and Safety
Quality Assurance
Human Resources
Volunteer Services
Central Supply
Plant Operations
Property
Purchasing
Residential Care Services
Veterans Claims Office
Medi-Cal
Social Work Services
Audiology
Dental Services

SERVICES OPEN

Post Fund Enterprises Services
(Coffee Shop and Tavern)
Post Exchange Store (BX)
Creative Arts Center
Chaplaincy and Divine Services
Security (except for ID Badges)
Fitness Center
Library
The Member Helper Program
Ambulatory Care Clinic with reduced services
Transportation: Bear Flag Bus, Emergencies and Dialysis

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, and welcome you to stop by again during normal business hours, or visit the CDVA web site at www.cdva.ca.gov. Urgent contacts may be handled through the Home's Operator, (707) 944-4600. THANK YOU for your patience during this fiscal emergency.



Vaudeville Show in HRA

By Lou Zauner

“Tony Castle – Spectacular Vaudeville Show” came to the Hospital Recreation Area on Friday, January 16. The entertainer had an audience of nearly 100, mostly Hospital Residents to delve back to the World War II years of radio and movies--and later, television-- to bring almost-forgotten show people back to life. The posters which adorned the stage said it all: Betty Grable, Gene Autrey, George Burns, Frank Sinatra, John Wayne, Dale Evans and others.

Many popular stars of radio and motion pictures got their starts in vaudeville acts – Jack Benny, Edgar Bergen, Kate Smith and Bob Hope, to name a few – but Vaudeville declined as entertainment in the 1930s in the U.S. Tony Castle brought memories of those years back to life in his costume, fast patter, “old” jokes in rapid sequence, gestures and actions – all reminiscent of the that era’s stage productions. And, as a reminder,

This special show by Tony Castle was a *Tribute to Veterans* with songs going back to WW I and WW II such as, “There’s A Little Blue Star in the Window,” “Love More, Live Longer,” “This is the Army Mr. Jones,” “I Don’t Want to Walk Without You,” and “I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen.” He recalled the “Big Brown Radio” era of Red Skelton, Groucho Marx and the stars that meant so much to WW II servicemen and women such as Betty Grable, Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, George Burns and Gracie Allen.

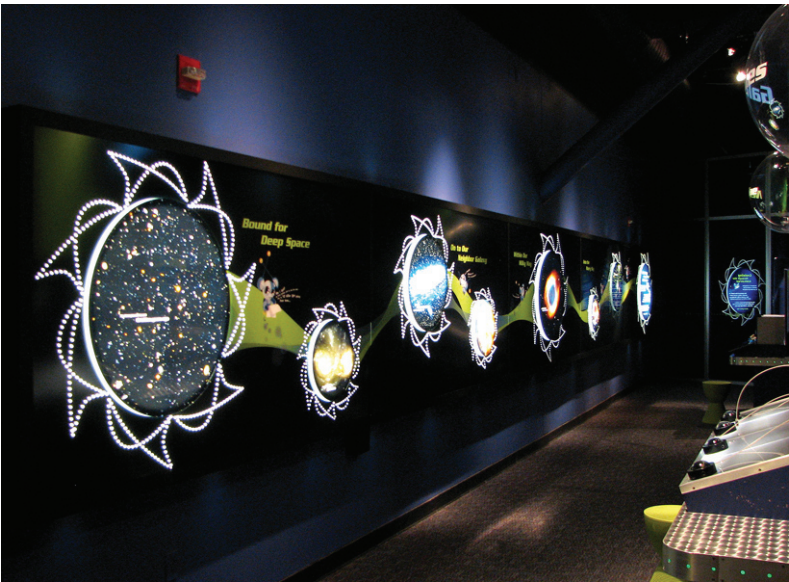
Thank you, Tony Castle, for a nostalgic and entertaining afternoon.

A Chabot Space and Science Center Odyssey

By Lou Zauner

Did you know that scientists estimate it was 18 billion years ago that the Big Bang occurred that created the Universe and all its galaxies? That it took 13 billion years for our galaxy to develop? That in a light year light travels six trillion miles. These are only a few of the astounding facts that were presented to Home Members at the Chabot Space and Science Center in Oakland on Thursday, January 22.

The Planetarium Theater features a 70-foot-high dome that fits like a cone over the entire auditorium. Here, in the 30-minute film “Cosmic Voyage,” one is not only transported to the vastness of outer space, but also to the infinitesimal microcosms of inner space. The film is 70mm (twice that of motion picture film) provides a vision of floating in a space vehicle to observe thousands of miles of earth or outer space, or a trip through a microscope to the smallest particles of matter known to man. An indescribable stunning show!



The Center also has numerous exhibits –a room presenting facts about galaxies, the stars and sun; exhibits showing space survival equipment and space travel vehicles; a Biology Room with enough information to dazzle the mind; and hands-on exhibit to activate star search or space information. And if all this isn’t enough, you can view more exiting Planetarium presentations such as “Dinosaurs Alive,” “The Living Sea,” “Human Body,” and “Mysteries of Egypt;” to name a few.

The Chabot Space and Science Center, named after the father of hydraulic mining, is a continuing and expanding public observatory serving Bay Area schools and citizens since 1883. More information is available at www.chabotspace.org.

Larry Vucovich and Friends--A Cabaret Interlude

By Lou Zauner

Let’s go back to circa 1950 A stage watched by a cocktail lounged audience listening to the romantic music of that era: “Melancholy Baby,” “If I Had You,” “What Is This Thing Called Love.” No, it wasn’t a fancy hotel in San Francisco but the Hospital Recreation Area on Thursday afternoon, January 29, where Larry Vucovich on keyboard, Sanna Vuckovich vocals and drums and Chris Anberger with bass fiddle entertained.

Larry Vucovich is a highly versatile jazz pianist who performed with top musicians such as Cab Calloway, Anita O’Day, and Red Norvo. His “Quizas, Quizas” (“Perhaps, Perhaps”) was flavored with “salsa.” Larry commented, “I use the keyboard to give the music that extra spice.” Between the soft and “swooning” vocals by Sanna Vucovich and arrangements by bass fiddle-talented Chris Anberger, music never sounded better. With such favorites as “Bye-bye Blackbird,” “Moonglow,” and “Brazil” the hour passed much too quickly!

The performance of “Larry Vucovich and Friends” was brought to the Home by Bread and Roses, a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing hope, healing and joy through live music. With coordination by the Therapeutic Activities Department, Bread and Roses has brought many fine programs in the past to the Veterans Home. We thank the performers and all for a great musical trip back to yesteryear.

New from the Video Library

By Squeeky Bolner

Thanks to Tom Edwards from Section C, we now have 60 new DVDs.

Home Members, before you buy a DVD, come here first to see if we have it. At present there are over 3000 DVDs in the Home’s Video Library. Save some money, there are limited funds available for special requests if we don’t have the title you want.

And remember; if you have purchased a DVD bring it to us. We will house it and take care of it so you don’t have to store it!

So come visit the Home’s Video Library in Section F, room 260.





Harlem Globetrotters World Tour

By Lou Zauner

On Sunday, January 18, Home Members joined thousands of fans in the Oakland Oracle Arena to see the world famous Harlem Globetrotters.

In their 82 years the Globetrotters have played more than 25,000 games in 120 countries. Their famous theme song, “Sweet Georgia Brown,” accompanies their basketball antics. The games are actual basketball games but mascots and spectators are asked to join in. It adds a brightness and variety to the spectacular dribbling and basket-shots that amaze their audiences.

The original Globetrotters was formed in 1926 by Abe Saperstein. As their winning streaks and proficiency increased, they began to clown for the audience when they had a safe lead. The all-black team, a prominent leader, chose the name “Harlem Globetrotters.” Eventually their buffoonery, incredible coordination and skillful handling of basketballs, unusual and difficult shots, elevated them to a team known more for entertainment than sports.

As I See It-- *Murder Can Be Fun*

By Lou Zauner

That’s the way we saw it when Home Members attended Dreamweavers’ production of “Murder at the Howard Johnson’s” on Sunday, January 25, afternoon performance. For anyone who likes stage plays--especially a good farce--this “Murder” was sheer enjoyment.

The billing said it all: “A love triangle in a Howard Johnson Motor Inn. First episode: Mitchell, an obvious and commonplace dentist who sees himself as the dashing, heroic type and Arlene, a middle aged ‘Femme Fatale’ of sorts, plan to murder her husband Paul, a blundering used car salesman. Second episode: Having discovered Mitchell has been unfaithful, Arlene allies herself with Paul to do away with Mitchell. Third episode: The two men, feeling betrayed themselves, join forces against Arlene.”



Arlene (Krisi Pilkington), Paul (Barry Martin), Mitchell (Dal Burns)

Okay, I’ll give away the ending – “This Murder attempt like the others fails” – but it’s a good time watching and hearing Krisi Pilkington as “Arlene,” Dal Burns as “Mitchell” and Barry Martin as “Paul,” trying to do each other in. Good plot. Good acting. Good directing. Good show.

The Dreamweaver’s is a community theater located at 1325 Imola Avenue West in Napa. Information is available at www.DreamweaversTheater.org or by calling (707) 255-5483.

Super Bowl Sunday



In the tradition of great football, several records were broken during Super Bowl XLIII. With snacks and drinks in hand, Home Members watched the game on the Coffee Shop/ Tavern’s two big-screen TVs. The game is now part of National Football League history: the longest intercepted touchdown run, 100 yards by Steelers’ defensive player James Harrison; the come back by the Cardinals, against the highest score (13 points) in any Super Bowl Game; and the Steelers’ 6th trophy, the most for any Super Bowl team.

2009 VA’s National Salute to Veterans

The week of February 8th through 14th is the 2009 VA’s National Salute to Veterans. Local celebrities, youth groups (schools, Scouts, Campfire and others), members of the general public and

veterans service organizations will visit patients at VA medical centers, nursing homes, state veterans homes and other facilities.

The annual Salute program began in 1978 when the VA took over sponsorship of a program that began in 1974 by the humanitarian organization “No Greater Love, Inc.” The program is to honor veterans; increase community awareness of VA’s role in providing comprehensive medical care to the Nation’s veterans; and encourage Americans to visit hospitalized veterans and work as VA volunteers.

VA Voluntary Service staff plan and execute local events and activities at VA medical centers. The Salute is observed annually during the week of Valentine’s Day, a day of caring and sharing which underscore the Salute’s expression of honor and appreciation to inpatient and outpatient veterans.

For the 17th consecutive year, the nationally syndicated colum started by Ann Landers, now called Ask Annie,

has devoted a column to the Salute, asking readers to send Valentine cards and letters to hospitalized veterans. More than a million cards and letters are sent to VA patients each year during the Salute.



Daytime TV actor and Emmy nominee James Reynolds is chairman of the VA 2009 National Salute to Veterans. The Marine veteran is best known for his long-running performance as police officer Abe Carver on “Day’s of Our Lives.” Reynolds was also nominated for an NAACP Theatre Award for his work in the theatrical production “Buffalo Soldier.”

It’s Tax Time Again...

Home Members may have to file 2008 taxes, either because they owe taxes or qualify for a refund. Gay Sherman in Social Work Services has a schedule of tax assistance organizations and businesses that can help you with your taxes. The schedule of dates, times and tax assistance groups is posted in the residences. Some are by appointment only and may fill quickly. There are possible charges with some of the groups but many of the returns may be processed for free.

If you have any questions, please call Gay Sherman at 944-4570, or stop by her office, 3E-10 in Holderman Hospital.

Music Hath Charms: Music Therapists Wear Many Hats

By Chris Williams

When King Saul fell into a depression, he called for a music therapist. Ellen Patterson wasn't available yet, so he asked for that rock-throwin' kid, David, to play his lyre. I hear David did quite well later in life. Ellen did good, also. (Your editor will be delighted with that precision in grammar.) She combined her early talent and training in music with her desire to help others ... which is almost the definition of music therapy.

Ellen began singing and piano lessons at five and was an accompanist by sixth grade. She credits the empathy and watchfulness required of an accompanist for contributing to her choice of music therapy as a career. During her twenty-two years on the job, she has worked with people of all ages toward a variety of goals to: promote wellness, manage stress, alleviate pain, express feelings, enhance feelings and promote physical rehabilitation.

In addition to voice, piano and guitar, Ellen has mastered other instruments, including the violin ("though I'll never be in Ann Gilleran's league", she says in tribute to a colleague). She originated or supervised many of the Veterans Home programs we appreciate, including the Senior Chorale, Jammers, Serenaders and Drill Team. She is already planning for the Talent Show later in the year while preparing for the Napa Valley Chorale on the 25th of this month.

Ellen's 21 year-old son continues the tradition. He is a music major at California State University at Hayward and aims for a career as a professional. He is adding to his mother's memories of growing up in a musical family. She is enriching the tradition by realizing that music is both an end in itself and a tool for being of service to others.

Paul Cheatham II--Home Member of the Year 2008

By Lou Zauner



The Allied Council of the Veterans Home at Yountville recently named Paul Cheatham as "Home Member of the Year – 2008." For those who know Paul Cheatham it came as no surprise because of his origination of the "KIKS" (Kind Initiative for Kids Shoes) Program. Through humble-beginning efforts, he was able to deliver 300 pairs of shoes and 600 socks to poverty children in Soweto South Africa. In April he will return, where dignitaries of South Africa are establishing a Chapter of KIKS. His "Meals on Wheels to African Heels" has brought proud recognition to the Home and to the United States throughout South Africa.

The plaque for his "Home Member of the Year" award will be added to Paul's already-filled wall of commendations, recognition certificates and medals. These honors have made him the most-highly decorated African-American of NATO Forces. His most cherished is "The Soaring Eagle Award," a Presidential Citation awarded by the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. NATO Forces in Europe.

From modest beginnings in Southern California, Paul Cheatham left high school at age 17, to join the Navy during the Vietnam War. After discharge, he joined the Peace Corps. Paul later entered Loyola Marymount College and eventually became a social psychologist. Beginning in the Veterans Administration, Paul advanced to a career with NATO. He worked as a Community Services Officer, traveling to numerous countries in Europe until his retirement in 1999.

In 2004, Paul took a trip to South Africa to follow the history of Nelson Mandela and Apartheid. He couldn't dismiss the fact that the impoverished children had no shoes in their harsh world. Paul vowed to make a difference.

In 2007 when the relatively young Paul Cheatham entered the Home, he was not ready for any thought of retirement. Kicking off "KIKS" was a start toward his goal of helping impoverished children. Paul now looks forward to expansion of KIKS poverty programs to the United States. Paul Cheatham has not put any limits to his energy or ambitions and is now back to "Meals on Wheels" until his next venture.



Special Events for Residential Care Members

February		
Date	Time	Event
15 Sun	7:30am	Napa Senior Center Breakfast
15 Sun	11:45am	"Beach Blanket Babylon" in San Francisco
16 Mon	10:00am	Shopping: Fairfield Mall
17 Tue	8:30am	Breakfast Club: "Highway 29 Cafe "
17 Tue	3:00pm	"Taco Tuesday" at Compadres in Napa
20 Fri	5:00pm	Elks Dinner in Napa
23 Mon	10:00am	Shopping: Target, Raleys, WalMart in Napa
25 Wed	9:00am	Oakland Zoo trip
26 Thu	12:30pm	LeMange and Library trip to Napa
27 Fri	10:45am	Bunch for Lunch, "Black Bear Diner" in Sonoma

February Community Events (for Home Members & Yountville)

Date	Time	Event
15 Sun	3:00pm	Napa Valley Symphony Strings at Lincoln Theater
21 Sat	8:00pm	"Smuin Ballet" at Lincoln Theater
22 Sun	8:00pm	"In The Mood" at Lincoln Theater
24 Tue	8:00am	River Rock Casino
26 Sat	7:00pm	Napa Valley Youth Symphony benefit show

HRA: Hospital Recreation Area.
Home Members, for information about off grounds trip, Lincoln Theater performances, and to sign up, call the Activities Office at 944-4900.

Movies in Holderman Rec Area

Date	Time	Movie
Fri 13	6pm	Appaloosa
Mon 16	6pm	Words and Music
Tue 17	6pm	Man Who Knew Too Much
Wed 18	6pm	Absence of Malice
Fri 20	6pm	REcount
Mon 23	6pm	Footlight Parade
Tue 24	6pm	The Heiress
Wed 25	6pm	One Fine Day
Fri 27	6pm	When Did You Last See Your Father?

Holderman Recreation Area is located on the first floor of Holderman Hospital at the west end of the building.

Thank you, AMVETS, for your continued support of the Yountville Veterans Home Media Program

